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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/654,203	09/03/2003	James A. Rakowski	RL-2000	5809

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EXAMINER
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ALEJANDRO, RAYMOND

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1745

DATE MAILED: 06/16/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/654,203	RAKOWSKI, JAMES A.	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Raymond Alejandro	1745	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09/03/03.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-98 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-98 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
  - I. Claims 1-28, drawn to methods for making ferritic stainless steel articles, classified in class 420, subclass 71.
  - II. Claims 29-34, drawn to a method of improving high temperature oxidation resistance of a ferritic stainless steel article, classified in class 148, subclass 95.
  - III. Claims 35-48, drawn to a method of making a solid oxide fuel cell, classified in class 29, subclass 623.1.
  - IV. Claims 49-76, drawn to a ferritic stainless steel (composition), classified in class 420, subclass 34, 40 or 62.
  - V. Claims 77-87, drawn to an article of manufacture, classified in class 428, subclass 617 or 650.
  - VI. Claims 88-98, drawn to a fuel cell, classified in class 429, subclass 34.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are directed to related methods of making or improving ferritic stainless steel articles. The related inventions are distinct if the inventions as claimed do not overlap in scope, i.e., are mutually exclusive; the inventions as claimed are not obvious variants; and the inventions as claimed are either not capable of use together or can have a materially different design, mode of operation, function, or effect. See MPEP § 806.05(j). In the instant case, the invention of Group I is directed to a method for making the ferritic stainless steel article not subjecting it to an atmosphere and a temperature characteristic of conditions to which a solid

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oxide fuel cell interconnect is subject during fuel cell operation, whereas the invention of Group II requires to subject the ferritic stainless steel article to an atmosphere and a temperature characteristic of conditions to which a solid oxide fuel cell interconnect is subject during fuel cell operation.

3. Inventions I and III are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different designs, modes of operation, and effects (MPEP § 802.01 and § 806.06). In the instant case, the different inventions have different designs, modes of operation, and effects, for instance, the invention of Group I is directed to methods for making the ferritic stainless steel article per se while the invention of Group III is geared toward a method of making a solid oxide fuel cell which is power generating device.

4. Inventions I and IV or I and V are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make another and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case, the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process, for instance, (*as admitted by the applicant*) the product as claimed can be made by the different processes recited in either independent claim 1, independent claim 10 and/or independent claim 11. On the other hand, the process as claimed can be used to make another and materially different product such as the specific ferritic stainless steel (product) as recited in independent claims 49, 59 and 76. The product can also be made by process including different heat treatments as shown in Figure 5.

5. Inventions I and VI are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different designs, modes of operation, and effects (MPEP § 802.01 and § 806.06). In the instant case, the different inventions have different designs, modes of operation, and effects, for example, the invention of Group I is directed to methods for making the ferritic stainless steel article per se while the invention of Group VI is geared toward a fuel cell which is power generating device.

6. Inventions II and III are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different designs, modes of operation, and effects (MPEP § 802.01 and § 806.06). In the instant case, the different inventions have different designs, modes of operation, and effects, for instance, the invention of Group II is drawn to a method of improving high temperature resistance of a ferritic stainless steel article while the invention of Group III is geared toward a method of making a solid oxide fuel cell which is power generating device.

7. Inventions II and VI or V are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different designs, modes of operation, and effects (MPEP § 802.01 and § 806.06). In the instant case, the different inventions have different designs, modes of operation, and effects, for example, the invention of Group II is method requiring to subject the ferritic stainless steel article to an atmosphere and a temperature characteristic of conditions to which a solid oxide fuel cell interconnect is subject during fuel cell operation, while the inventions of Groups VI or V are directed to ferritic stainless steel or articles made of the same not subjecting the ferritic stainless steel article to an

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atmosphere and a temperature characteristic of conditions to which a solid oxide fuel cell interconnect is subject during fuel cell operation.

8. Inventions II and VI are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different designs, modes of operation, and effects (MPEP § 802.01 and § 806.06). In the instant case, the different inventions have different designs, modes of operation, and effects, for example, the invention of Group II is method requiring to subject the ferritic stainless steel article to an atmosphere and a temperature characteristic of conditions to which a solid oxide fuel cell interconnect is subject during fuel cell operation, whereas the invention of Group VI is geared toward a fuel cell which is power generating device.

9. Inventions III and IV or V are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different designs, modes of operation, and effects (MPEP § 802.01 and § 806.06). In the instant case, the different inventions have different designs, modes of operation, and effects, for example, the invention of Group III is geared toward a method of a making a solid oxide fuel cell which is power generating device, while the invention of Groups VI or V are directed to ferritic stainless steels or articles made thereof.

10. Inventions III and VI are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make another and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case, the process as claimed can be used to make another and materially different product, for example,

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the process can be used to make different fuel cells such as the ones recited in independent claims 88 or 91. As well, the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different processes such as the processes recited in independent claims 35 and 41. Additionally, the fuel cell can also be made by processes including different heat treatments as shown in Figure 5.

11. Inventions IV and V are related as products which share an alleged common utility of providing a stainless steel based product but the common utility is not linked to a substantial structural feature. The products in this relationship are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the products encompass embodiments that are not required to perform the common utility or (2) that the products as claimed can be used to perform another utility. In this case, the products as claimed can be used to perform another utility such as a manufacture for metallurgical applications rather than a fuel cell interconnect.

12. Inventions IV or V and VI are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different designs, modes of operation, and effects (MPEP § 802.01 and § 806.06). In the instant case, the different inventions have different designs, modes of operation, and effects, for instance, the invention of Groups VI or V are directed to ferritic stainless steels or articles made thereof while the invention of Group VI is directed to a fuel cell which is a power generating device.

13. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

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14. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and the inventions require a different field of search (see MPEP § 808.02), restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

*In addition, further restriction is necessary. Thus, applicant must elect one (1) of the above groups and one (1) of the species below.*

15. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species:

Species 1: Example 1;

Species 2 Example 2;

Species 3: Example 3;

Species 4: Example 4.

The species are independent or distinct because they correspond to mutually exclusive embodiments not overlapping in scope.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, no claim appears to be generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of an



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allowable generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

16. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103(a) of the other invention.

17. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Raymond Alejandro whose telephone number is (571) 272-1282. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday (8:00 am - 6:30 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick J. Ryan can be reached on (571) 272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Raymond Alejandro  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1745



RAYMOND ALEJANDRO  
PRIMARY EXAMINER